

**F**

390

IC



Class F 340

Book I 6









INTERESTING ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF ONE OF THOSE

**Unfortunate Men,**

WHO WAS

**SHOT AT TAMPICO,**

**With Twenty-Seven of his Companions,**

DECEMBER 14th, 1835,

**WITH A LIST OF ALL THEIR NAMES,**

TOGETHER WITH THE

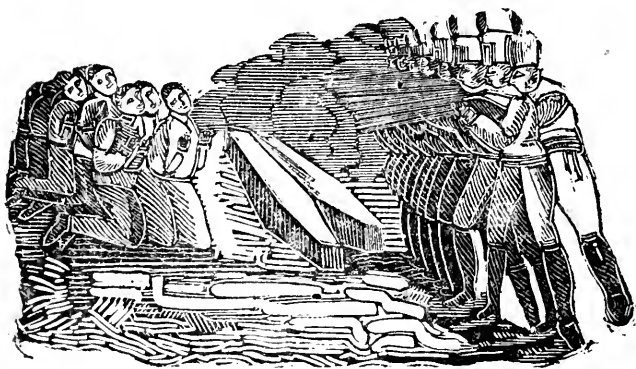
**LETTERS**

*Which were Written by the Sufferers.*

---

"The moving accident is not my trade;  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts;  
'Tis my delight alone in summer's shade  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts."

---



NEW-YORK:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1836.

181  
26

•  
•

181-2

25

•  
•  
•  
•  
•

•  
•  
•



## TO THE PUBLIC.

This Pamphlet contains a short account of the life of one of those unfortunate Men who was made a prisoner by the Mexicans, with twenty-seven other deluded followers, in the rash and unfortunate expedition against Tampico, by Gen. Mexia, and were shot on the morning of the 14th December, 1835. It will no doubt be very interesting, giving a brief sketch of his own life, together with a list of Persons that suffered with him—and will be sold at the moderate price of **ONE SHILLING.**





## LIFE AND ADVENTURES.

---

I am an American by birth, and glory in the name; I was born in the town of E—, county of C. my Parents were in humble circumstances, but respectable, my Father was a farmer, and had seven children, of which I was the eldest, and my Parents intended to give me as liberal an education as their means would allow, (as I was very delicate, and they were fearful in my youthful days that I was in a decline) and prepare me for the ministry ; but Providence has decreed it otherwise. I was sent to a most respectable school under the charge of Mr. E., one of the best of men, and an excellent scholar, where I remained three years, and prepared for College, but at that time I took a wild notion in my head of going to sea, which almost broke the hearts of my dear Parents, and they endeavored all in their power to persuade me from such a mad career, but I would not listen to their kind and affectionate advice, (the *Devil leading me on*) and after my Parents found that all their entreaties were of no avail they consented to my going a voyage, trusting that if I was spared I would return and relinquish such a life. My dear Mother then began to make preparations for my departure, and to get me such things as I would stand in need of for my comfort, when I was far away from her, and toss'd about on the boisterous Ocean. After all things were ready, I left my Brothers and Sisters, and my dear Parent, with many prayers offered up to the throne of grace, for my safe return, and started for the city of B—, with my Father, where we arrived after a few hours, and put up at the house of Mr. H—, who I think was an excellent man, and who did all in his power to try and persuade me to give up the idea of going to sea, and return home. I must confess I almost began to repent, but the idea of returning and being laughed at by my young companions, made me determined to "GO-AHEAD." After a few days my Father was successful by the letters of

introduction that he brought with him, and obtained me a situation as a green-hand on board of a Merchant-man bound to L—. The ship then hauled out into the stream, and after I had been to the Custom-house, and received my Protection, I was taken on board, and we then laid there for three or four days; but I must confess within my own mind, I wished myself safe home again, for every thing was quite different to what I had ever been accustomed to—for instance, to see the men eat out of Tubs (as I called them, but what are termed by Seamen, Kidds,) without a fork or a plate, with their tarry hands, fairly made me shudder—and therefore I lived upon the little *nick-nacks*, as long as any remained, but at last necessity compelled me to have to do as they did, and in a short time I could eat my allowance as well as any on board. Whilst laying in the stream I used to cast my eyes up and think to myself I can never go aloft—the officers never attempted to send me up until we reached the Gulf-stream, we then had been at sea, I think, two or three days, and night setting in, it began to blow, and the thunder and lightning was awful, and for rain it fell in torrents, (*to a person who has never seen a storm at sea, it is impossible to describe it.*) It was so dark that you could not see your hand before your face, except when a flash of lightning would come, and the sea was running mountains high, and had the appearance of being all on fire, and the thunder rolled as if it would shake the whole universe, when the mate ordered me to go up on the top-sail yard, and help the men reef the top-sail, I told him I couldn't, I would fall overboard, he used a tremendous oath and taking a piece of rope flogged me up.—I then wished I could have been at home, but alas! it was too late—but I put my trust in him who was able to save me to the uttermost, and after several months voyage, I once more returned to my native land, enjoying the best of health—and was soon in the embraces of my dear Parents.

I was not long on land before I was anxious to be again ploughing the mighty deep, and in less than six weeks from the time of my arrival at home, I again took my departure for the W. I. islands. We had a very tempestuous voyage, and had to throw over the greater part of our deck load, which consisted of lumber, and once or twice we thought that we should be buried in the bosom of the Ocean; but the Lord ordered it otherwise, and we at last arrived safe into port at the Island of J—. But our troubles did not end here. The weather being extremely hot, and the Crew exposing themselves to the night dews, and drinking new liquor, several were taken with the yellow fever, and we lost three

whilst we were in port, and another died the second day after we got to sea ; and therefore we had to make for the nearest harbor in the U. States. I then remained on shore for several months, and instructed in a Gentleman's family, but not liking confinement, I was determined to follow the bent of my inclinations, and go again to sea. I then took a voyage around the Cape of Good hope, to the East Indies, and I must say I was never more pleased with a voyage than I was with this. It is astonishing to behold the swell of the sea before it approaches you you will perceive it for a mile in distance coming like a high mountain to devour you, but by the time it is up with you, you can be prepared to meet it, and that is what makes those long swells (as they are called) more safe than the little crabbed seas in the Atlantic Ocean—And then when lying too off the Cape in a gale of wind, you have fine past time in catching Cape Pigeons, and a large Bird the size of a Turkey, called the Albatros. The manner of catching or fishing for these birds, are as follows : For the Pigeons you take a pin hook, and for the Albatros you have a regular fish hook, and putting a piece of pork on the hook, you let it out over the stern of the ship, and it will float on the surface of the water, and then one of the hands forward will throw over what the Sailors call slush, (or *the fat taken from the Coppers after beef or pork is boiled,*) and as the slush drops in the wake of the ship the birds will alight, and taking hold of the bate, they get hooked, and you haul them on board, and when once on board they cannot rise again. I could not help smiling to myself to see the old Sailors take the Pigeons, which are nothing but bones covered with feathers, and make what they call a sea-pye, something similar to a pot pye at home ; but I could not eat it myself it was too rank to be good. We also had the misfortune to lose a young man overboard ; we had been lying too in a gale of wind, and when the weather moderated he went aloft to lend a hand to loose the Fore-top-sail, and he being on the lee-yard-arm the ship gave a heavy lurch, and he fell over board, and he cried out for God sake save me. We did all we could—but it was in vain, he had dropt a-stern, and his spirit had taken its flight to the regions above where the weary are at rest, and the wicked cease from troubling.—Poor fellow, he was the only support of an aged Mother and two Sisters. And what must have been their agonizing feelings when they heard of the death of him whom they looked up to in the hour of distress. We then passed the straits of Sunda, and frequently in a calm, the natives (in a state of nakedness) would come off from the shore in their Canoes

with fruit, such as bananas, plantains, cocoa-nuts, oranges, lemons, &c. &c., to trade with us, for which we would give them in exchange, brass buttons, old jack-knives, brass rings, &c. &c., but we could never persuade them to come on board, they would point at our cannonades, and tell us they heard them go *bang, bang, bang*, as we frequently through the night would fire signals to another ship, that was in company with us going through the straits—except in one instance, one day we were entirely becalmed and a canoe came off to trade with us, and in the canoe were two old men and a little boy about twelve years old: After a great deal of persuasion they permitted the little fellow to come on board. We then took him and, as the Sailors say, rigged him out with a suit of *Clothes, shoes, hat, &c.*, but he was entirely out of his element, he did not like to be so encumbered, and the old men said that as soon as they got on shore, their King would take them away from him.

Nothing more occurred of any consequence, and we at last arrived safe at Canton. I cannot say much about it as I was only at the City for a day or two; the ship lay sixteen miles below at a place called Whampo, where all the American vessels lie—and the cargoes are brought down the river by the Chinese. The country being over populated, thousands of families are born and brought up on the river, and the Chinese will sell rats and puppies to make pies of, and generally speaking they are the greatest set of Thieves in the world. The Chinese Empire is very extensive, and the people in many respects are singular. The towns and cities of China are surrounded by high walls, and none but Chinese are suffered to enter them. The people shave their hair, but let a long queue grow out behind, which is plaited, and hangs down the back. The women think small feet very beautiful, so they wear small wooden shoes, or tight bandages which make their feet so small that they cannot walk, but waddle along like a duck. The inhabitants of China know how to build houses, and are very ingenious in their manufactures, but they have by no means so much knowledge of the various arts which are necessary to make life comfortable and happy as we have. When a ship arrives here, boats will come along side with Tartar girls on board for to engage for your washing; they will wash and mend for the Sailors all the time that the ship is in port, and when they are going to sail they have to pay these girls one dollar our money, and they then present the Sailors with a pot of preserved oranges, and *Ching Ching*, their *Josh*, (*as they call it, that is worship their Idol*) for a fair wind to send the ship safe home.

After we had taken in our cargo, consisting of teas, &c., we sailed and passed in sight of the Island of St. Helena, which is noted as having been the place to which Napoleon Bonaparte was sent, and where he died. It is a rocky Island, far in the sea, and a lonely and desolate place.

On our homeward bound passage we made the Cape of Good Hope, but it was at night, and therefore I did not get a view of it. We had a pleasant passage with only one exception, that in the Gulph Stream, as we were laying too, we were struck with lightning, which injured one man considerably, and shattered our spars, but we soon repaired damages, and had all things snug once more, and in a few days was again safe in port. I now returned home to visit my dear Parents, after an absence of one year, having made a prosperous voyage, and anticipating a great deal of pleasure and happiness in their society and that of my friends; but alas! how vain are the things of this world—for before I had reached the place of my nativity, I heard of the death of my Mother, who had departed this life suddenly; but a few moments before her decease she appeared to be enjoying good health, and the prospect of many years to live in this world; but she was too good, too kind a Parent and neighbor, and the Lord of the Vineyard thought it best to take her to himself. She was an affectionate Parent, but not foolishly so, her word was her bond, and what she said could be relied upon, and if I have ever had any good or religious principles instilled into me, it was my dear departed Mother that first inculcated them, for many prayers have I heard her at the dead hour of night offer up for the welfare of her children, and to see us night and morning on our bended knees with her (who is now gone) supplicating the Throne of Grace, would have made a heart of stone melt. I am confident there is a reality in religion that the world knows nothing of; but at the same time I am fearful there are *many*, too *many* who make outward professions to appear to the world as christians, but inwardly their is no sincerity—to those I would only say, *beware!* the greater will be your condemnation—and to you who are sincere press forward, put your trust in God and fear not what man can do unto you, and although all your friends and acquaintances should discard you, and you should be considered as an outcast in the world, yet if you are sincere, and wear the armour of righteousness, you will finally be received into that Kingdom not made with hands but eternal in the heavens. I confess I have been wild and imprudent myself, and what the world may call wicked, (*but I have more charity for my fellow beings than they have for me—but I will say in the*

words of Stephen, "let him that never sinneth cast the *first stone*," and I think we should all be found wanting,)—but in my most gay moments, and after I have been with my ship-mates on shore, when I have returned and been alone and began to reflect, I have thought of my departed parent's advice and the prayers and supplications she has offered for me, and I have wept and prayed to God to forgive me those sins that most easily beset me, and to change my heart—for what is life that we should desire to remain here, how much better I may say glorious, is it for us "to depart and be at rest"—and I think in the words of a celebrated Poet—

"A cloudy day, lit up by transient gleams,  
The fearful brightness of a shooting star;  
The dazzling loveliness of fleeting dreams,  
Which frowning phantoms in succession move—  
Such, such is life !

A bowl which sparkles brightly at its brim,  
But soon upon the sated palate falls ;  
A sun-bright view, which shadows quickly dim;  
A strain—whose music or no echo falls :—  
Such, such is life !

O for a state more glorious far than this !  
Where mutability no *more* is known ;  
But souls redeemed, partaking heavenly bliss,  
With humble gratitude and praise my own—  
This, this is life !"

My Father taking the death of my Mother very much to heart, was desirous that I should now stay at home with him, and I concluded that I would, and therefore commenced teaching in the vicinity of my native place, and in a short time I had quite a respectable school. Nothing occurred to mar my happiness for two years, and having in the course of that time become acquainted with a young lady whom I thought in every way adequate to make me a happy companion through the journey of life, I offered her my hand, which was accepted, and the time appointed, and every thing was nearly in readiness, when alas ! without the least excuse, she gave her hand to another—(oh ! thou false ! but fair one)—without my knowledge—which so worked upon my feelings, that I had to relinquish my school, and for several months my health was despaired of, as it preyed so upon me : She thought she was doing better because she was agoing to have a man that could command more property, as money seemed to be her idol ; but in less than six months she repented of



her rash act, as he did not prove to be the *kind, indulgent* husband she thought he would make. Every thing was done by my friends to cheer up my drooping spirits, but it was all in vain. The Physicians then recommended a change of scene as the last remedy to restore me to health. It was then concluded upon that I should take a voyage to sea; I therefore once more, but with different feelings to what I ever had experienced before, left my Father's house. I felt I know not how, and it appeared to me as if life was a burthen, as my expectations had been blasted. I arrived at the city of B—and took passage on board of the Brig S—, bound to one of the W. I. Islands, and after a few days we set sail, and had a prosperous and pleasant passage, and my health began to be reinstated, as I did not feel so desponding, although I confess at times I could not help having a gloomy sensation pass over me.

After having been absent several months, I prepared to return again to the U. States, and took passage on board of a schooner; and we had a good run, and every thing bid fair until the evening of the fifth day, when the weather began to look very squally. The Captain had every thing put in good order, the schooner was under easy sail, and made as we trusted snug for the night. But alas! how vain is the strength of man, for before the midnight watch it blew a complete hurricane, and we could not carry a stitch of canvass, and a short time after we carried away our topmast, and a heavy sea struck us amidships, which carried away our galley, and with it the poor little cabin boy, and every thing that came in its way. We were then almost a complete wreck, the vessel unmanageable, being right in the trough of the sea, and we expected nothing else but to find a watery grave. We then got a spare spar that we had, and bending it with the small cable, we paid it out into the sea, which kept our head to the wind, and we laid the remainder of the night like a duck—and towards morning the gale abated some, but only to begin fresh, for about 10 o'clock it commenced again, and blew more violent than ever, and we were compelled to cut away the foremast, and in a short time a sea struck us that laid us upon our beam ends. We then did all we could to save ourselves, and had it not have been for a ship that hove in sight we must evidently have perished, for in a short time after having been taken from the wreck she went down.—We then had to alter our course, and instead of returning home we had to go to London, as the ship was bound there. London is the metropolis of England, and is an immense city, being seven miles in length and five miles in width. The

Thames passess through it, across which is one bridge of iron, and several of stone—an attempt has also been made to construct a tunnel or road under the river, so that persons, carts, and carriages might pass beneath, while the river with its thousands of *brats* is flowing in its channel above their heads. This work is partly executed, but further operations are at present suspended. In crossing the ocean we must expect to meet with our share of adventures. Taking leave of our friends we again departed—the sails filled—and we leave London bound to Lisbon, the Capital of Portugal : it has a fine harbor, and is one of the most commercial cities in Europe, it has a great trade in wines and fruits with the U. States and England. But previous to leaving Lisbon I became acquainted with an American family, that put me in mind “of days gone by,” and I quote these verses as appropriate to one of that much beloved circle of friends—

“ Forget thee, Mary !—no, not yet,  
 Too pleasing is the pensive debt  
 Which memory owes to thee ;  
 Not out of mind, though out of sight,  
 While retrospection claims her right,  
 And friendship can afford delight,  
 From all such fears be free.

For whom would memory’s magic art,  
 Wish to enshrine within the heart ?  
 Oh, would it not be one  
 Simple, ingenuous, modest, meek ;  
 Whose praise we scarcely dare to speak,  
 So much her eye, and changing cheek,  
 Each plaudit seems to shun ?

Whose gentle manners, void of art,  
 Can cheer, and charm that wounded heart,  
 Which beauty could not bow :  
 Such live in memory’s ear and eye,  
 Endear’d by many a tender tie,  
 And though remote, are very nigh,  
 And such, dear friend, art thou.

Yet lovely as thou art, not thine  
 The praise alone : for this one line  
 I know thou’lt not reprove me ;  
 Young as thou art, thou know’st from whence,  
 Thy brighter charms of soul and sense ;  
 Be he who gave them, their defence,  
 And all who know must love thee.

We having now our cargo on board, once more set sail with a fair wind, for our native land, and in a gale of wind fifteen days out, one of the seamen fell from aloft, (it blowing fresh,) and dislocated his arm, and two days afterwards another man, who had been at the helm during a severe thunder gust, whilst the remainder of the watch were sheltered from the storm, (*being an infidel*) cursed the thunder and lightning and them that sent it, when in an instant a thunder bolt struck him speechless ; he was immediately taken into the Cabin, and being bled he soon came too, but was for several days unable to do his duty, and what was more remarkable, his breath was so strong of sulphur, that it was almost impossible to approach him. This awakened him to a sense of his duty, and made him acknowledge that there was a Supreme Being, and it was a judgement inflicted upon him for his blasphemous language. Nothing more occurred of any consequence during our passage, except that we caught a Shark about fourteen feet in length, which, when we got on board and opened, we found a part of a Man's arm in him. After having thrown over the carcase, we caused the arm to be sown up in a piece of canvass and committed to the deep.

Having again reached the place of my nativity, what were my feelings to find that my Father had also paid the last debt, and had gone "*to that bourne from whence no traveller returns.*" He departed as he had lived, a Christian, and proved to the world that nothing could soothe the pangs of death like pure and undefiled religion, and a firm belief in the atoning blood of Jesus—and to use the words of a celebrated Poet:

"Thou art gone to the land of the dead, and the bell  
Is mournfully tolling thy funeral knell ;  
Within the dark coffin is pillow'd thy head,  
And without it the pall for a covering spread ;  
From the home which thy presence so long has endear'd  
Where thy smiles were beloved, and thy worth was revered  
To the last earthly home, where thy reliques shall rest,  
Thou art journeying in peace ! Be thy memory blest !"

I now remained at home, with the intention of settling my father's business, and seeing my brothers and sisters provided for, my eldest sister having got married, (a short time previous to the death of our beloved father,) and to a very respectable mechanic ; she took possession of our domicile, and is not only a sister, but a mother to the younger children. Having been at home now some length of time, and still feeling rather

melancholy, I concluded I would go to New Orleans. After having been there sometime, I embarked, on the 6th November last, with about 130 men, composed of Americans, French and Germans, two-thirds of which were of the first named class, (including three who were natives of foreign nations, but naturalized,) on board of the American schooner Mary Jane, Capt. Hall, said to have been chartered or employed by a committee, of which Mr. William Christy of New Orleans, was agent, to convey emigrants to Texas, but what were my feelings I cannot describe when after having been at sea a few days, I found it was not the intention of taking us to Texas, but we had to go to Tampico, and there against our own will, take up arms against the Mexicans, and having been made prisoners, we have now to suffer the penalties of the Law. From a Declaration which has been signed by us nine hours previous to the time at which we are to meet our unhappy fate, we prove to the world, that we die innocent—and trust our Country will avenge our wrongs.—I hope my dear Relatives and friends when they hear of my untimely fate will not weep with sorrow, for I go rejoicing as I have nothing in this world that I have a desire to remain for “*it is better to depart and be at rest.*” I pray the Lord will have mercy upon me, (and my unfortunate Companions) and support us in the trying moment, and that our spirits will ascend into Heaven, and at the sound of the last trump we shall meet with those that are near and dear unto us, never to be separated again.

## DECLARATION.

---

The following declaration was signed by the unfortunate victims who were recently shot at Tampico, as their farewell address to their friends in the United States :

“ We, the undersigned, prisoners of war, condemned to be shot on Monday next, at 7 P. M. by a military court martial, conformable to the established customs of the country, and composed of officers of the Mexican army, the sentence being read and interpreted to us on Saturday at 4 P. M. by Captain Alexander Faulac of said army, as our last dying words, do declare ourselves innocent of the charge of either participating or colleaguimg with any person or party, having for its object the revolutionizing or disturbing in any manner the tranquility of the government of Mexico, and that the testimony given before the honorable court of enquiry will corroborate this declaration, the facts and circumstances being briefly as follows :

This opportunity afforded many in low pecuniary circumstances a passage free, which was readily embraced and accepted of. The terms agreed upon were, that it was optional whether the party took up arms in defence of Texas or not; that they were at full liberty to act as they pleased when landed on the Texian shore. That taking advantage of this favorable opportunity they accordingly embarked—the vessel proceeded on the voyage, and nothing transpired to indicate that all was not right as it should be, until the 6th day we were cut from Balize, although it had been previously understood that a general, with his officers or staff was on board the vessel, whose design it was to act in concert with the Texians, and induce us to join him. Of this however we received no certain assent, but the truth is—Tampico was our destination and an attack on the city, the design, which was now evident, and not before—the land being in sight and the vessel standing in, it was announced that it Tampico; that the steamboat then also in sight would have us in tow, and Tampico would be in our possession. Elated with this harrangue proceeding from the authority (through the instrumentality of captain Hawkins, one of the aids) of general Mehia, some were induced to join his standard, but of these the number could not have exceeded fifty, thirty-five of whom

were French and Creoles, of New Orleans, who doubtless had a previous understanding, they being exclusively privileged, having the quarter deck to themselves, and seemingly armed and equipped prematurely. The boat had us in tow soon, and all that could be crammed below were driven there, until she struck the bar, and the steamboat soon afterwards. In this awful predicament, night closing on us, the sea breaking over us, efforts were used to reach the shore, which at imminent danger was effected safely, and we were all landed during the latter part of the night and early part of the morning of the following day. A formidable fort surrendered without an attack, and we built fires to dry our clothing. The party were now tendered arms and ammunition, and never having been soldiers before, some probably took them from curiosity, others from necessity, and others from compulsion; and it is asserted and believed that no one person was or had been acquainted with two others of the number of us, so added to the hurry and bustle of the officers, that before we could have an understanding we were commingled and bundled together more like a herd or drove of swine than a company of soldiers competent to act as such, particularly against regular trained soldiery. At about five P. M. on Sunday we were formed and made ready for the attack, having added to our number about from thirty-five to fifty citizens, soldiers, or adherents, and which were all judged to be Mexicans, a number being fellow prisoners with us, but without trial to this moment. Having no other resource we were necessarily compelled from obvious reasons reluctantly to join the party; with a full determination not to act in concert with it, but submit ourselves as prisoners of war, having no design or intention to fight, the undersigned, from motives of conscience and oppression, added to the shameful abduction or deception practised on us, choosing to throw ourselves on the clemency and mercy of the authorities. And this being the substance of our testimony before the court, yet notwithstanding, mark the result which has terminated, not an ignominious, but christianlike death. Trusting in God and bearing in mind his promise and with our trust in his mercies, we die both as christians and men.

We have now but nine hours allotted us, and conclude hastily requesting all who may hear of our fate to entertain no erroneous impression."

Signed, &c.

## LIST

*Of persons shot at Tampico, at 8 o'clock in the morning,  
of the 14th December, 1835.*

Arthur H. Clement,	of Phila.	aged 40
Thos. Whitaker,	" do.	" 30
Win. C. Barclay,	" N. Y.	" 20
Jacob Morrison.	" do.	" 21
Edward Mount.	" do.	" 23
Chas. Gross,	" Penn.	" 23
Isaac F. Leeds,	" N. J.,	" 30
Mordecai Girt,	" Md.	" 53
David Long,	" Ohio,	" 25
Wm. H. Makay,	" Va.	" 20
Jonas K. Stuart,	" Vt.	" 33
Daniel Holt,	" Canada,	" 18
James Cramp,	" England,	" 22
Lewis Jacob,	" do.	" 21
John Martin Ives,	" do.	" 35
Thos. H. Rogers,	" Ireland,	" 23
Daniel Donnelly,	" do.	" 20
Jas. Farrell,	" do.	" 23
Auguste Sausseur,	" France,	" 22
Demeussent,	" do.	" 25
Fred. Debois,	" Dantzic,	" 24
Fred. Wm. Marier,	" Germany,	" 22
Henry Wagner,	" do.	" 24
John Irish,	" do.	" 24
Andrews Helm,	" do.	" 50
George Iselin,	" do.	" 27
L. M. Bellepont,	" Hanover,	" 26
Wm. H. Morris,	" N. Pro.	" 28

Three prisoners died in the hospital, viz :

— Fleming, aged about 25, native of Pittsburgh ; Harris Blood, aged 40, native of England ; James McCormick, aged 30, native of Kentucky.

## LETTERS.

---

"It is a matter of astonishment and indignation that no cognisance has been taken, by our government, of the murder of **TWENTY-EIGHT AMERICAN CITIZENS** at Tampico! Has the blood of freemen become so cheap and worthless that their government allows it to be poured out with impunity? Are twenty-eight Americans, betrayed into an unlawful expedition, to be shot like wild beasts, and no notice taken of the outrage? If so, then American Citizenship loses its boasted guaranties of life and liberty.

The following letters from one of these ill-fated young men a native of our own state, shows that he had neither forfeited the respect of his fellow citizens, nor the protection of his government. And yet nothing is done to avenge his foul murder!

The first letter was addressed to the unfortunate victim's brother-in-law, James Brown, Esq. of Oswego, and the other to his parents, who reside in Volney, Oswego county. They both breathe the spirit and sentiments of a noble mind, sustained in its hour of peril by the consciousness that its hard fate was unmerited. A government which withdraws its protection from such men, forgets or neglects one of its first and highest duties.—*Alb. Eve. Jour.*

TAMPICO, Dec. 12, 1835.

*Dear Brother,*

When this reaches you, I hope you will bear the relation of my fate with at least as much firmness as I, who will have been placed beyond the reach of future calamity. I cannot break the news to you by degrees, but must immediately say, that I left New Orleans, as my last letter home expressed, with a view to go to Texas in company with a great many others who, like myself, were seeking to better their circumstances; and as soon as we were out at sea we were introduced to a general of the late Mexican revolution, and who in the course of the voyage, had us all formed into companies of soldiers; a step against which, when I attempted to remonstrate, the only satisfaction gained was an order to go below. The next disastrous news was, that instead of going to Texas, we found ourselves landed at the place from whence I now address this.



I felt myself already sacrificed to the ambition of this demagogue, Gen Mexia, and attempted to leave the company, but unfortunately was compelled to return, but upon arriving at the town, which it was intended to attack, I again left them, and to shorten the sad tale, was taken the morning following by the successful repellants, and being dressed in the uniform of Mexia's troops, have received the sentence of death, together with twenty-seven other young men whose lives have been made a sacrifice to villany and deception.

It ill becomes one so near the point of death to make an expression of hatred to any individual; but will the United States permit their citizens to be abducted by men who are now in their bosom in the midst of affluence and luxury; If not, then is Mr. Christy, Notary Public of New Orleans still answerable for this wholesale murder. But as I have now only a few hours left, let me use part of that time upon another subject. I have not written home, nor could I; the shock would have unmanned me. Believe me, when I say that death is not so frightful upon a close inspection as we are apt to think. Tell my mother and all the family not to think they are forgotten—they cannot think it—but as it would be useless to harrow up my feelings by calculating the worth I leave behind, so it is consoling to think that hope points out a future meeting when all the troubles of this world if remembered at all, will only serve to heighten the felicity of the next.

There is not a little consolation in the reflection that the debt of nature has not been hastened by any crime of my own; and that I die, neither an ignominious nor guilty death. To be shot, on Monday morning, at seven o'clock, would at one time have sounded alarming in my ears, but it is only anticipating the event which all expect in the course of a few years at the furthest; and the last request which I have to make is, that they will not suffer the news to overwhelm them, but to prepare to meet death as calmly as I assure them is the case with me. There is nothing in it but a departure from care and trouble; and let them consider I leave them in a short, very short struggle, and that this, at least, is better than to suffer on the languishing death bed. Farewell, and again.

I add—be very particular to break the tale with great circumspection, as the keenest pang I have yet felt, has been the fear that they will feel greater sorrow at my death, than I do myself. My last prayer is, that the power which they supplicate for all blessings, will sustain them in this trial, and watch over them till we meet again. Farewell. Your unfortunate, but happy brother,

JAMES CRAMP.

TAMPICO, Dec. 13, 1835.

*My dear Father, Mother and Sisters :*

I have changed my mind with regard to writing home, as I have no doubt that the last letter from me will be valued as much as a rich legacy, indeed what could be more valuable or precious, than the assurance that one whose welfare has always occupied so large a share of your attention was enabled to perform the great business of life, to prepare for death with all the tranquillity and satisfaction that could be desired. I have enclosed the last relic\* which I can send you, and that is accompanied with a request that you would not bedew it with tears of sorrow ; but if the precious drops of affection should fall upon it, let them be sweetened by the reflection that the object of your love never disgraced you, and led a life which, though he does not deceive himself by deeming it perfect, yet was tainted by no crime which harrowed his mind or disturbed his peace in the hour of death. \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \* I was urged to try my fortune in the south—the event is made known to you by Mr. Brown. I shall not dwell long upon the detail. Justice and mercy are the conspicuous attributes of the Dispenser of all things, and to his decrees I feel myself perfectly willing to resign. I have not written to William, and hardly think I shall be able to do it, as there are so many prisoners who wish me to write for them, and it is impossible to refuse them, as they are too agitated to do it for themselves. \* \* \* \*

I have just risen from praying and find that the best foundation in the day of trial is the Rock of Ages.

Adieu, as the night is far advanced I have not much time to spare, as I have yet to address a letter to Mendon. My dear friends farewell, and remember that ere this reaches you, I shall have

“Sweetly slept the sleep of death.”

and recommending us all to the care of heaven. I now sign my name to this last epistle and earnestly request your prayers for the salvation of

Your unfortunate and  
sacrificed Son,  
JAMES CRAMP.

---

\* A lock of his own hair.

## TAMPICO PRISON, Dec. 13th, 1835.

Dear Father and Mother—When you receive this I shall be in my grave. I shipped from New Orleans for Brazo, Texas, without the knowledge of any of our friends, and was forced to put into Tampico, and there made prisoner, and am to be shot, together with twenty-seven others, to-morrow morning at seven o'clock.

Give my love to my brothers and sisters. I hope you will not mourn for my death, as I shall die perfectly happy.

Your affectionate Son,

WM. C. BARKLEY.

The following letter is also from one of the unfortunate young men :

"I will in as few words as possible, give you intelligence of my fate—which is an untimely one—I, together with twenty-seven of my companions, am to be SHOT, according to orders given us by a court martial of Mexican soldiers and officers, for an attack on this city on the night of the 15th November last. It would be idle to give you a description of the battle, you have probably heard of it. During the engagement, I received a wound in the head by a ball, and another through the right hand, in consequence I have been in the hospital until this afternoon, from the morning of the battle.

For my own part, I am perfectly resigned to the fate which awaits me. No money can save us—even five thousand dollars was offered for any one individual ; there was likewise offered one hundred thousand dollars as a ransom, but they refused it, thinking that the example of our slaughter will deter others from the cause of liberty.

This is a regular massacre : we should have been treated as prisoners of war. I hope the Americans will avenge our death—I have only a few hours to live—God bless you all. I can write no more. Farewell."

The object of the Mexicans was not only to kill these unfortunate Men, but to make them suffer as much as possible before this was effected—for this purpose, their guns were fired within a few paces of their bodies, and aimed at those parts which would not cause instantaneous death ; this is why some of them were shot ten or fifteen times, before life became extinct. Their clothes were set on fire by the wadding of the guns, and suffered to burn off them.

Among the number shot, were two youths, apparently about 17 years of age. A large pit was dug, and after these

unfortunate but brave men were stripped of their shoes and boots, they were indiscriminately thrown in. A few moments before they were shot, one of them, an American, implored the guards in the presence of a priest, for a drink of water, which was refused ! Among those who were shot, we learn the names of Wm. H. Morris. J. Ives, engineer, and a Mr. Demeusent, who in a particular manner distinguished himself with a courage and firmness seldom equalled. On his executioners wishing to tie a bandage round his eyes, he indignantly repulsed them. Do you think, said he, I am afraid to look death in the face ? No !—I die the death of a martyr of liberty—he then ordered the soldiers to shoot, and on the first fire, more fortunate than the rest, he was killed. He did every thing to inspire his comrades with courage and resignation, and to meet their fate as became men.

Two hours before the execution, Mr. D. wrote a song to the air of the Marseilles hymn, which he sung from the jail to the place of execution.

---

“Thou sleep’st far from the land of thy birth,  
But thy name and thy memory are dear ;  
And, though foreign thy grave, its fresh earth,  
Closing o’er thee, was wet with a tear.

The warm tear of affection ! as true,  
As sincere, and as kind, as if drawn  
From fond eyes, which here wept for thee too,  
And had watch’d thee from Infancy’s morn.

But though bitter the tidings appear’d  
Which told us that thou wert no more ;  
And though painful it was, ere we fear’d,  
To find that suspense was all o’er :

And though mournful it was, as we read  
The last record thy love had address’d,  
To reflect that it came from—the dead !  
Now, for thee, every care is at rest.

Thou art number’d with those who can know  
Neither sickness, nor sorrow, nor pain ;  
From whose bright eyes no tears ever flow.  
And whom death cannot conquer again.

For their God dwells among them ;—and they  
See his face, and rejoice in his light ;  
And his presence is pledge of their day,  
For his glory has banish’d the night ;

Since such the fruition—that Faith  
Suggests to thy spirit as given ;  
Can we mourn, although sudden thy death,  
And distant thy transit to heaven ?

No! surely 'twere selfish indeed,  
To regret that thy troubles are o'er ;  
Reason's law, Christianity's creed,  
Commands us to sorrow no more.

But to think of thee, now, as of one  
Removed far from sorrow's control ;  
Whose brief race of existence is run,  
And hath ended at Glory's lasts goal.

Perhaps He, whose omniscience transcends  
All wisdom to mortals made known,  
But conducted thee from thy friends,  
To make thee more truly his own.

For it is not while here we sojourn,  
Encircled by all we love best,  
That our hearts are most likely to learn  
This is not the place of our rest !

That place of true rest thou hast found ;  
At least so we humbly may trust,  
Nor boots it, though foreign the ground  
Where thy reliques may moulder to dust.

For thy spirit, redeem'd through His love,  
Which alone can redeem,—sought its fear ;  
Joys immortal surround it alone ;  
Peace be with its memory here !









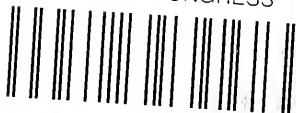








LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 645 483 5